

to: (a) the binding between opposing bases of the first and second strands; (b) the binding between opposing bases of the third and fourth strands; and (c) the binding between opposing bases of the second and fourth strands. See Fig. 6. --

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend claims 1 and 11 as follows:

1. (Amended) A multiplex structure comprising:
- a first strand containing a first sequence of nucleobases;
 - a second strand containing a second sequence of nucleobases, wherein said second strand is associated with said first strand by Watson-Crick bonding;
 - a third strand containing a third sequence of nucleobases; and
 - a fourth strand containing a fourth sequence of nucleobases, wherein said fourth strand is associated with said second strand and said third strand by Watson-Crick bonding, and wherein at least one nucleobase of said fourth sequence of nucleobases is associated by Watson-Crick bonding to at least one nucleobase of said third sequence of nucleobases and to at least one nucleobase of said second sequence of nucleobases.

11. (Amended) The multiplex structure of claim 1, wherein each nucleobase in said second sequence and said fourth sequence binds to two other nucleobases.